

Former Colombian Intelligence Chief Sentenced to 14 Years



Bogota, May 1 (RHC)-- The former head of Colombia's national security agency, Maria del Pilar Hurtado, was sentenced by the supreme court Thursday to 14 years in prison.

Hurtado was convicted on charges of conspiracy, embezzlement by appropriation, unlawful violation of communications, forgery of public documents and abuse of authority.

The scandal occurred between August 2007 and October 2008, when Hurtado served as director of the Department of Security, known as DAS, during the presidency of former conservative leader Alvaro Uribe (2002-2010).

Hurtado was convicted after former officials confessed that they had received direct orders from the then director of the DAS to carry out illegal surveillance and obtain confidential information from journalists, politicians and court magistrates.

The court also sentenced Hurtado's colleague Bernardo Moreno, former secretary-general of DAS, to eight years under house arrest for the same crime.

The judge's ruling is less than the original sentence requested by the prosecution, which was 20 years in prison for Hurtado.

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